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PROGRAMME PLANNING

Country and intercountry programmes and projects

FOURTH COUNTRY PROGRAMME FOR UGANDA

Note by the Administrator

I. PREPARATORY PROCESS

1. The fourth country programme for Uganda has been developed by means of a dialogue between UNDP, the Government of Uganda, the United Nations system organizations, and other multilateral and bilateral donors. It takes into account the preliminary conclusions and recommendations of the national technical cooperation assistance programmes (NaTCAP) process, the Technical Cooperation Policy Framework Paper and the UNDP advisory note. It has also been prepared in close consultation with the partners of the Joint Consultative Group on Policy (JCGP) and based on the priorities established by the Government in the 1990/91-1994 development plan, itself based on policy guidance, priorities and resource expectations recommended by the 1991 Consultative Group for Uganda.

2. The preparation of the fourth country programme also takes into account the consensus reached and recommendations made in the mid-term review of the third country programme regarding the use of a programme approach and a sharper focusing of UNDP's technical assistance on a smaller range of development themes so as to maximize effectiveness.

3. The Ministry of Planning and, particularly its Aid Coordination Unit, played a major role in guiding the country programme formulation process which embodies a consensus among sectoral ministries while closely following the advisory note in terms of areas of focus and programme strategy and management.

II. ANALYTICAL COMMENTARY ON THE COUNTRY PROGRAMME

4. Despite the results achieved under the economic recovery programme in terms of economic reforms, including liberalization of the exchange rate and internal trade, the achievement of a GDP growth of 6.6 per cent per year during 1987-1989, a recovery of investment to 15 per cent of GDP by 1988, and a decline in the rate of inflation from an average annual rate of 230 per cent in 1986 to 27 per cent in 1990, a review of the national budget in 1991 had showed that the balance-of-payments current account deficit had continued to rise, exacerbated by adverse international price changes, and public expenditure had continued to outstrip revenue. Furthermore, 46 per cent of the national budget was allocated to defense, and the share of both defense and general administration had increased during the past two years at the expense of the social sectors.

5. Analysis of human development indicators, although the data are uneven, reveals a picture of long-term improvements although current levels of access to basic social services are still very low and there are significant disparities between men and women. Adult literacy was estimated at 70 per cent for males and 45 per cent for females in 1985; in 1983, girls accounted for 45 per cent of enrolments in grade 1 of primary school and for 35 per cent of enrolments in grade 7. On the positive side, however, infant mortality fell from 133 per thousand live births in 1960 to 101 in 1989; life expectancy rose from 43 years in 1960 to 52 years in 1990; 20 per cent of the population had access to safe water in 1989 compared with 35 per cent in 1975-1980.

6. It is within the context of the new national budget announced to the parliament on 2 July 1991, reflecting a shift of emphasis to the social sector and the provision of social services, that the Government formulated its proposals for the fifth cycle.

7. More particularly, as women's access to income, education, training, assets and resources is greatly inferior to that of men, increasing the access of women to social and economic services and to resources is an integral part of the country's development strategy reflected in the country programme; these issues are not only addressed at the policy and management level but also figure in the income-generation and training activities proposed in the context of the rural based programme for the alleviation of poverty.

8. The first programme proposed will address the serious capacity constraints remaining in policy formulation, implementation and management; in the public sector, UNDP will promote greater domestic efforts at the mobilization of resources which are necessary to finance the implementation of the reform agenda, particularly the introduction, as a first step, of a minimum living wage for a scaled-down civil service. Results of this programme will be measured against a number of indicators set under the national reform agenda, including the increase in the share of government revenue in GDP from 6 to 20 per cent and the scaling down of the civil service by a minimum of 20 per cent. In the social sector, policy-formulation

capacity will be strengthened and the adoption of policy measures should have an impact on adult literacy rates in general, and on the drop-out rates among girls at the primary and secondary levels in particular.

9. Within the same programme area, UNDP will support efforts by the Government to restore the confidence and conditions for private sector investment in productive capacity in Uganda; within the context of the withdrawal of the Government from certain economic activities, UNDP will aim at building local policy and management capacity for establishing new arrangements such as financial markets and the promotion of competitive conditions in all markets. Based on the new philosophy, the Government aims to retain 100 per cent equity in only 16 of 112 public enterprises. Similarly, State monopolies of the Coffee Marketing Board and Lint Marketing Board will be abolished and new companies will be formed with the view to enabling the private sector to participate in internal and external marketing.

10. Although it is not yet possible to quantify its effects, the impact of the AIDS epidemic will be felt in all aspects of economic and social life. Under the second programme area proposed in the new country programme, UNDP will support the Government's inter-ministerial, cross-sectoral, multi-donor funded programme for a national alliance against AIDS, in terms of capacity-building, policy development, planning and implementation as well as donor mobilization and coordination; it will also support grass-roots and community-based activities (micro-projects) through local NGOs, including small-scale credit. Results expected in this particular area are also difficult to define in quantitative terms. It is nevertheless likely that the indicators of success will be identified in terms of a possible levelling off of the spread of AIDS (education aspects) and an eventual increase of life expectance for the HIV-positive people which would prolong their productive years by up to between 5 and 10 years (health aspects).

11. UNDP can make a significant contribution to poverty alleviation and rural development by contributing to the Government's strategy for achievement of sustainable and equitable agricultural growth and diversification. Particular attention will be paid to the promotion of rural non-farm production which improves the access of women to resources and to higher-skilled and to higher-income activities and to support for NGOs and other community-based organizations. Programme results will be assessed inter alia in terms of their contribution to the Government's objective of doubling rural productivity within a two-year period. Furthermore, each programme activity will be results-oriented and have its own indicators of success.

12. In the area of environmental sustainability, the Government's strategy is being formulated. The new country programme will therefore concentrate and direct its efforts, in collaboration with UNSO, towards capacity-building for policy formulation and planning, and the integration of the environmental dimension in national and sectoral planning that builds on active local participation.

III. MANAGEMENT OF PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

13. The adoption by UNDP of a programme approach to country programming is only possible where the Government itself has adopted such an approach. A preliminary appraisal of the suitability of pre-existing strategy documents (such as the one on the national strategy for AIDS) and an assessment of national implementation/execution capacity will determine whether a full-fledged programme framework or a support programme needs to be developed in each case.

14. The successful pursuit of the programme approach by the Government and UNDP, as well as by the United Nations system and other organizations will require a number of changes in traditional management and monitoring concepts. In view of the relative complexity of programmes compared to projects, success will depend even more heavily on the quality of design and on the management structure that is put in place for implementation. In Uganda, the suitability of programme management units to assume the responsibility for day-to-day (micro) management, monitoring and implementation of the programmes is being examined. Such units would be located in the immediate environs of the main programme activities. UNDP has recommended that such units should be headed by a full-time national manager.

15. Monitoring and evaluation of the programmes will be undertaken by a variety of methods, including quarterly tripartite reviews and annual audits, and independent evaluations. The clear definition of measurable results and success indicators will be a vital component of programme design. It is recognized that the successful implementation of such programmes will require a longer-term commitment by the Government and UNDP than has been usual in the past.

16. National execution will be the preferred mode of programme implementation; there will be increased use of expertise, services and goods supplied by or through governmental, non-governmental and private institutions in programme development, implementation and management. The specialized agencies of the United Nations system will, however, continue to play an important supporting role. Increasingly, their actions will be directed at providing management support and short-term specialist knowledge to complement national skills.

IV. RECOMMENDATION OF THE ADMINISTRATOR

17. The fourth country programme for UNDP assistance presented by the Government constitutes an important contribution to the national recovery programme by supporting and promoting capacity-building efforts in critical areas designated by the Governing Council, while also supporting a major programme initiative in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

18. The Administrator recommends that the Governing Council approve the fourth country programme for Uganda.